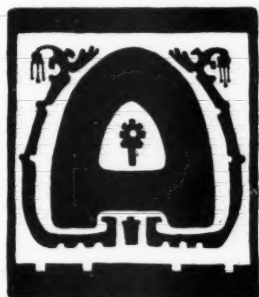


DESIGN

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ART has often been taught as an exercise in learning certain skills with pencil and brush or the tracing of patterns in order to acquire perfect work for exhibition. The process has been to get the students to do the same things that others have done many times before and every member of the class produce work exactly alike. We are too anxious to seek immediate results with visual and concrete production each day.

New methods have fortunately come into the teaching of art and children are encouraged to express their concepts of the stories they read and activities of every day life. Emphasis is placed upon originality, creative ability, initiative, planning and judging. The effect of such training will develop the creative, explanatory, experimental habit of mind rather than the passively acceptive habit. When persons develop the habit of being individual, of striking out on one's own to project new things in new ways, an exceedingly significant change will have been brought about in the attitude of mind.

Dr. Overstreet has said in his book *Influencing Human Behavior*, "Creative is one of those awe inspiring words which we use with a kind of reverent surrender of our clear thinking. We do not seek to analyze it. A creative mind is just creative. It is a gift of the gods." This idea has been most unfortunate for it has developed the view that inventiveness is a power with which a few rare individuals are endowed at birth and little effort has been made to develop the latent powers we all possess. Initiative and creative power in a greater or less degree are possessed by every individual. When teachers are fully convinced of this fact, children will be given an opportunity to develop their creative ability and art education will be revolutionized. Instead of serving chiefly as technique for the transmission of past information its energies will be directed towards arousing the inventive powers latent in all children. Information will always be an important factor in education because a background of facts is helpful to the creation of new ideas, but the transmission of facts should be instrumental; never an end in itself. It should be instrumental to the production of that questioning, experimental, creative mind which is the greatest asset of any civilization. The new education begins with the fact that art is a natural and normal human activity, not something that must be injected into the human animal in doses. Lewis Mumford has said, "All children are potentially artists, some in one medium, some in another, but all capable of sharing and creating that patterned rhythmic experience which distinguishes itself from other types of human activity": work, routine, mechanical skill being art. Now the art opens up a channel from the child's inner life, expressing symbolically some wordless desire; now it fixes in a living pattern an all too effervescent experience, or again it expresses in an imaginative way the facts of history, geography or literature.

Inherent in all normal human beings is a desire for creative experience, a wish to shape things, conditions or events to our own ideals in some phase of life's activity. To be an ideal designer, carpenter, plumber, mechanic, poet, writer, cook or dressmaker means putting into operation the creative art within one's self. The creative imagination must vision the new products or situations, plan and accomplish the work in ways that are different from the ways others do them. Unless that which they do is creative, more or less original; they achieve little success. Any career grows by the method of creative adventure. One who merely imitates or copies will have no career. The methods of success are very much the same in the various occupations. Some of the methods are as follows:

- (a) Doing the thing better or more efficiently.
- (b) Visions himself as achieving a goal ahead.
- (c) Studies how to take the steps to reach the goal.
- (d) Secures the help of others.
- (e) Satisfies the public so that they recommend him.
- (f) Thoroughness of diagnosis and treatment appropriate to the conditions and needs.
- (g) Regards every opportunity as one for creative adventure and finds satisfaction in a newly realized efficiency, or a skilful adaptation of an old method.
- (h) Opportunity for inventions, of methods in which the worker takes pride.

If these methods are essential to every day life, why not begin in the kindergarten to allow the child's creative imagination to grow through art, creative in character. Why not apply these methods in developing every art situation? Such art teaching will help the child in finding the work for which he is by nature best adapted, and assist him in developing the ability to do this work and enjoy it. In all fields of art, whether one serves as a producer or an appreciative consumer, success depends upon the use of creative imagination, creative thinking, creative selection and arrangement. Our problem is how to develop these vital activities of mind and soul along with the training of hand and eye. It is all important that every individual find that field for which he possesses the most aptitude, and that the work will stimulate creative thought.

The greatest thing in every man or woman is that spark of the divine which we call creative imagination. The greatest expression of this attribute lies in socialized human service. Work in the spirit of art is man's greatest blessing and his most fruitful opportunity for creative adventure.

Laura De Vinney

♦ ♦ ♦

The tondo, *Prudence*, by Luca della Robbia is reproduced in color in this number through the courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The snake is the emblem of wisdom, the mirror of reflection, the two faces may indicate that Prudence gives to youth the wisdom of old age or that Prudence looks both forward and backward. A companion piece representing *Temperance* is in the Cluny Museum, Paris. It has been suggested that these two were part of a series intended to include also *Faith*, *Fortitude*, and *Justice*.



"The Resurrection," a remarkably interesting symmetrical composition made about 1443 to be placed over one of the doors of the Santa Maria del Fiore.

THE DELLA ROBBIAS

Ralph Fanning

TODAY, when ceramic arts are making such a rapid development and are proving themselves to be such vital elements in modern design, it is interesting to note the work of another age which also found terra cotta a convenient material for artistic expression. There have been, in fact, many such ages. Dwellers in all ancient river valleys where plastic clay could be shaped and burned hard enough to serve utilitarian purposes, made use of ceramics and developed such with the artistry their talents permitted. The interest to the design student is the manner of workmanship, whether the abundant and easily worked clay was being used as a substitute for the more costly stone or metal, or whether it was recognized as a material worthy of the best efforts of the artist. The matter of color made possible by natural ingredients and by glazed surfaces adds to the importance of this material in the realm of design. Combining both form and color there has been no more happy handling of terra cotta than the work which began to be the product of a certain Florentine atelier about the middle of the 15th century and which future generations have known and admired as Della Robbia ware.

The name of Della Robbia has become synonymous with the beautiful glazed ceramic decorations originally found

throughout Tuscany and now finding honored places in all great art collections. As familiar as the blue and white shining surfaces have become to art lovers, few have attempted to distinguish between the work of Luca della Robbia, the founder of the art, and the later members of the family, Andrea his nephew and Giovanni, the son of Andrea. To be sure Wilhelm Bode, Marcel Reymond and other writers of authority have expended much energy in ascribing various works to their rightful authorship in this family. From their efforts, three very distinct personalities appear, in spite of the critic's failure to agree in every case. Jean de Forille deserves the credit of presenting these three personalities with their representative work in the admirable little volume published by Henri Laurens of the Librairie Renouard, Paris. Excellent photographic reproductions of the work of the della Robbias have been made by Alinari of Florence.

Luca di Simone della Robbia was born in Florence the last year of the 14th century and his life spanned over eighty years of the glorious 15th century. From the will of his father, Simone di Marco della Robbia, filed in 1427, we learn that he was the fourth son and considered of much less importance in the family circle than his brother Giovanni,

who was a successful advocate. It is to the name of Luca, however, that the family owes its fame. Four years younger than Donatello, he deserves an almost equally exalted position in the golden age of Italian sculpture. Of his personal life, we know little except what is expressed by his numerous works. There is the brief biography given by Vasari. We know that his birthplace was on the Via S. Egidio; that in 1446 he became joint owner with his brother Marco of a house on the Via Guelfa. He, like his fellow artists, Donatello and the later Verrocchio, Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, never married. We do know that he educated the children of his brother. These facts are meager enough, but the work of Luca is sufficient testimony of a life of noble aspiration and of peaceful pursuits in the realm of art.

M. de Forille dwells upon the very sincere piety that must have prevailed in the household of the della Robbia and presents other testimony than the Christian themes of their work. Two sons of Andrea joined the Dominican order and a son of Simone entered the cloister at Monte Cassino. Luca, himself seems to have been more in accord with the spirit of the Franciscans and the careful student of his life has discovered in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, a manuscript of the songs of Jacopone da Todi, the greatest Franciscan poet, which has the inscription "Questo libro e di Luca di Simone della Robbia."

The work of Luca della Robbia, is, however, quite sufficient evidence of the Christian character of the artist. Except for some purely decorative motifs there is to be found nothing which was not of religious inspiration. There is, furthermore, a tender mysticism and a devotion displayed by his work which is unique for his generation. In some respects he reaches back into the middle ages rather than forward into the ripening Renaissance.

Trained in the atelier of the noted goldsmith Leonardo di ser Giovanni, Luca della Robbia probably worked on the famous silver altar of Pistoia where Gilio da Pisa (1353), Andrea di Jacopo d' Ognabene of Pistora (1316) and Pietro di Leonardo of Florence (1357) had also labored. From these 14th century sculptors as well as from Andrea Pisano and Giotto, Luca received his early standards of

sculptured art. It is, naturally, the influence of the two last named that is to be seen in the medallions which Luca carved in 1437 for the north side of the Campanile of Santa Maria del Fiore. So great is the influence of the artists who had designed the tower a hundred years before that these panels have a gravity and severity that appears rather

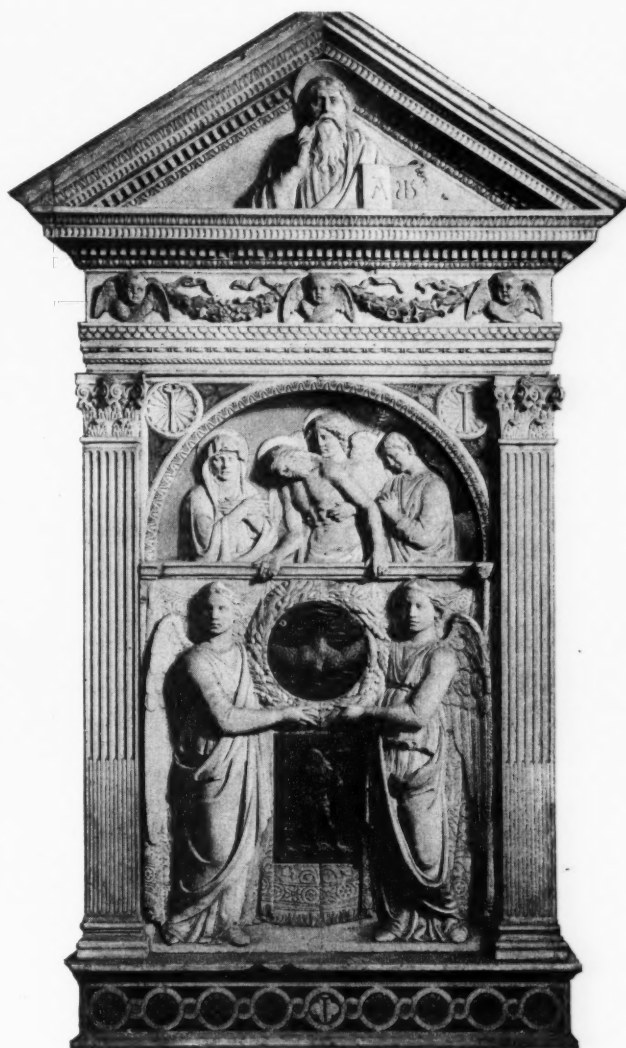
archaistic as compared to the splendid singing gallery within the Duomo which he, at that time, had already completed. Here his work is contemporary with those of the other great sculptors of the beginning 15th century. There must have been an interchange of influences with Jacopo della Quercia and Donatello, each of whom had contributed to the invention of a new style which has well been described as pathetic, burning, varied and, even when exquisite, abounding in vitality; with Ghiberti who in his search for elegance made himself a precocious master of realistic detail. Luca was content to express his religious emotions in a pleasant and pure style of which Andrea Pisano had given the first perfect examples. Even these simple forms sufficed to portray all the poetry which he carried within his heart.

In 1440, Luca della Robbia, now the recognized master who had created such superb marbles as the Cantoria of the Duomo, suddenly changed his medium. He perfected enameled terra cotta work. Numerous examples ascribed to him probably date from the period between 1439 and 1443. The success of this venture was so certain that in 1443, Luca was commissioned to make in enameled terra cotta "A Resurrection"

to surmount the door of the

Sacristy of Santa Maria del Fiore. From that period he almost entirely abandoned the use of marble for his statues and architectural decoration. Doubtless from 1446-1466 he worked on the bronze doors of the Sacristy of the Duomo, but they were designed and cast with the collaboration of Michelozzo. His reputation and fortune after 1443 evidence the success of enameled terra cotta as does the purchase of the house on the Via Guelf in 1446. From this time until his death he worked only in clay, multiplying these ceramic works whose delicate decorative character increases in expressive beauty.

With our practical economic sense today it is easy to



About 1442 enameled terra cotta appeared in a marble tabernacle carved for the Chapel of St. Luke in the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. This was later transported to the Church of Santa Maria de Peretola.

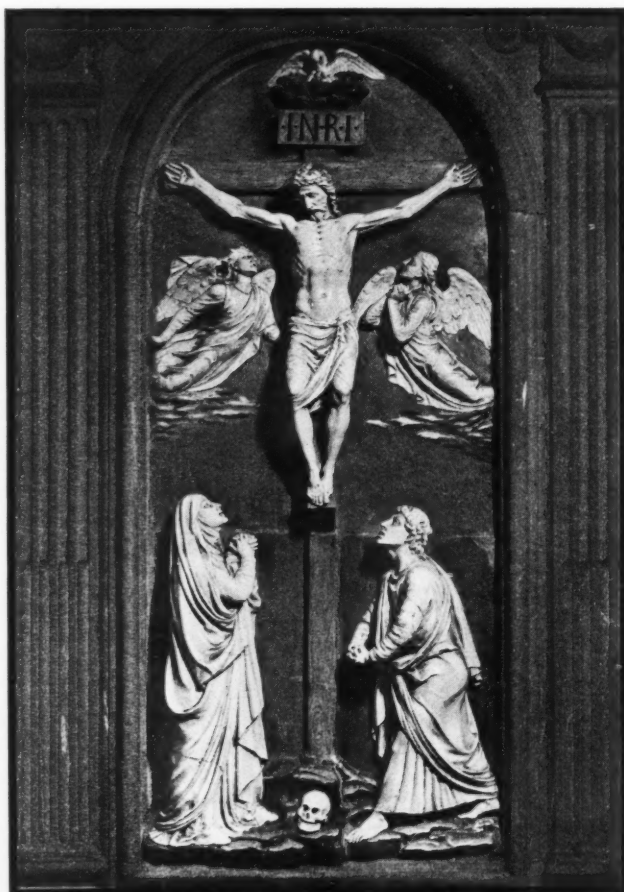


St. Andrew



St. Giacomo

Examples of medallions with figures of apostles made for the Pazzi chapel of Santa Croce between 1450 and 1460. These two representing St. Andrew and St. Giacomo as do all the twelve, display Luca's ability to compose a seated figure within a circular area.



The Crucifixion
In the Church of l'Impruneta—Florence



A Madonna and Child from the collection in the National
Museum in Florence which well represents simple and
charming grace.

understand why the della Robbia terra cotta would be a welcome substitute for the much more costly stone carving. The desire for shrines of beautiful workmanship not only in the churches but on the street corners and in the private houses, made the new venture of Luca most successful. The ease of reproduction and the comparatively low cost of the ceramic products made it possible for every Florentine family to have a beautiful glazed Madonna of its own. Without the highly artistic sense of such a producer as Luca, it is not probable that the innovation in religious art would have had the endurance that enables us to enjoy the excellent designs that still grace the churches and museums.

Luca della Robbia did not invent enameled terra cotta. At a period when Italy was happily imitating the plates and vases of Spanish-Moorish faience, Luca had the idea, as Vasari tells, of using a glaze like that of majolica to give terra cotta a beautiful colored slip which would render it more decorative and durable. It is certain that his research in this direction lasted some years, from 1438 to around 1442. In these years of his already glorious career no great work can be attributed to him. But in 1442 his enameled terra cotta appears for the first time in a marble tabernacle carved for the Chapel of Saint Luke in the Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. This tabernacle is dated by a document telling that Luca was paid 107 florins, 1 lire and 16 sous. It has been transported to the Church of Santa Maria de Peretola, a borough adjoining Florence. In a very beautiful and very simple architecture, imitative of the antique, three reliefs are placed one above another. There are two rather clumsy angels, a Pieta, sad and somewhat affected (in marble on a ground of blue enamel) and an Eternal Father beautifully conceived. This work, distinctly inferior to the Cantoria, is interesting because of the mixture of marble and enameled terra cotta.

In the years which follow 1450, the works of Luca della Robbia of known date are the funeral monument of Federighi, undertaken in 1453, the vault of the Portuguese chapel of San Miniato (1459-1466) and the bronze doors of the sacristy of the Duomo. The twelve apostles of the Pazzi chapel, the four saints of the Collegiale de l'Impruneta

(south of Florence), and many Madonnas were cast between 1450 and 1460. Other works of about this same time is the sober figure of the Resurrection and the Ascension in the Duomo, and possibly the Madonna with the eglantines in the Bargello where the Virgin, all in white, is seated on a throne among the wild roses while the *Enfant* leans forward to pluck one of the flowers.

There is the Madonna of the Foundling's Asylum and probably numerous other undated works, not to neglect mention of the plaques made to decorate the Or San Michele and the exquisite Madonna of the Via del' Agnolo, now in the Bargello. In the church of l'Impruneta the altar of the Virgin and the altar of the Holy Cross, are each decorated with charming terra cotta. In the Berlin Museum there are two groups, the Madonna of the Genoese and the Madonna with the Apple, of which there are beautiful antique copies in the Bargello.

There is a certain similarity of spirit about the numerous Madonna and Child reliefs of the later period of Luca and the work of Andrea. No doubt the two worked together. One efficient investigator has attempted to simplify the problem of distinguishing the Madonna groups of the uncle and nephew by asserting that Luca invariably places the Christ Child at the left of the Madonna while Andrea's more sentimental children appear on the right of the Virgin. This does seem to be true in the definitely assigned works, but is hardly a rule that can be too positively applied. It does, however, hold for the very charmingly composed group in the national Museum of Florence which one likes to believe representative of the simple and sincere art of the founder



Ascribed to Giovanni della Robbia.

In the sacristy of the church of Santa Maria Novella is a lavatory which has held its own in artistic interest with the many great works of art in that historic church.

of the atelier. In an age when the two dominating tendencies were naturalism and a return to the classical ideal, Luca della Robbia realized that the merit of his composition depended upon the principles of pure design—harmonious repetition of simple motives such as the predominating circles in his Madonna compositions,—rhythm of line secured by his clever handling of drapery,—balance provided by an adherence to static triangular compositions or rather strict symmetry. In the beauty of the human form is found all the necessary material, although spaces are sometimes filled with highly simplified floral forms or angel wings whose lines adjust

themselves to the desired pattern. Withal there is a restraint that makes the work of Luca della Robbia more Hellenic than he perhaps realized.

The Madonna of San Pierino which doubtless dates around 1465, is expressive of gentle melancholy. The sad Crucifixion of l'Impruneta and the four little Madonnas which M. de Forille believes to be contemporary with the works of l'Impruneta, may have been executed as late as 1470. In Venice, the ceiling of the chapel of the Church of San Giobbe is incrustated with five plaques from the workshops of Luca della Robbia and very probably by the master

competition with the many superb works of the Medieval and Renaissance periods of Italy's greatest artistic achievement, testifies to the lasting charm of the della Robbia's design. It serves to sum up the chief characteristics of the work of the earlier period. Taken in detail, each portion has interest, although as a whole it may lack some of the fineness of Luca's greatest works. The heavy garlands at the top supported by the cheerful cherubs are perhaps overpowering and may well be attributed to later members of the family. The enframement of the segmental panel at the top is also more in accord with the complicated technique



The detail of the architectural enframement of the lavatory of the sacristy of Santa Maria Novella has been attributed to Luca, but probably was the work of later members of the famous family.

himself. Four of the medallions represent the Evangelists and surround the central plaque of God the Father with heads of cherubim. The borders of rich garlands of fruit suggests the collaboration of Andrea della Robbia but the strength of the style and the severity of the figures attests that Luca was the principal author. San Giobbe was begun in 1462; this chapel was decorated entirely by Florentines and the medallions were evidently done after 1470. As they present an evident analogy with the Evangelists of the Pazzi chapel in Florence, they may be dated to the last years of the career of Luca.

A familiar work to the many visitors to the famed Florentine Church of Santa Maria Novella is the lavatory in the sacristy often attributed to Luca. That this purely utilitarian object should have held its own in art interest in

of a great nephew. But the subject enframement is of great beauty. The smiling Madonna looks down with indulgence upon the owners of the soiled hands who wash in the basin below. She clasps the sweet shining babe in an almost playful manner and since the child is on her right side the work has been attributed to Andrea. The symmetrically adoring angels fit so rightly into the remaining spaces and though cut off by the entablature upon which they rest at what might so easily have been an awkward anatomical division, in the simple treatment there is no sense of anything but graceful naturalism. The architectural enframement is the finest part of the work and here we feel that Luca's hand was most in evidence. The forms are derived from classical styler and lithic architecture. There is nothing new in the motive, but the manner and sensitiveness

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THE TONDO PRUDENCE BY THE DELLA ROBBIA

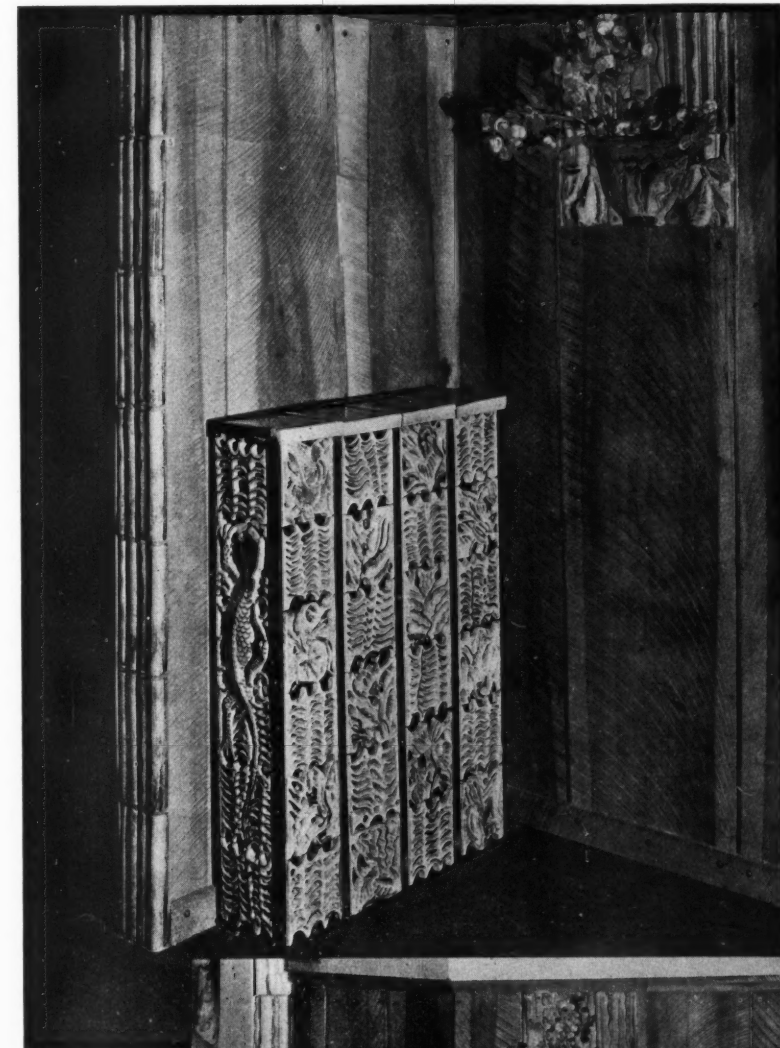


POTTERY RECENTLY SHOWN IN
NEW YORK*Ruth Canfield*

THE American Designers' Gallery, Inc., located at 145 West 57th Street, New York City is showing, among many interesting objects, designed and executed in the modern manner, a group of pottery by Henry Varnum Poor, the vice-president of that organization. The explanatory note accompanying this group reads as follows: "Elements of a dining alcove or porch, designed and executed by Henry Varnum Poor; walls panelled in tulip wood, table in tulip wood, radiator cover in pierced tiles, luncheon set of pottery, two tile wall plaques for flowers. The wood-work, both panelling and table, uses the unit of a sawn board in the simplest way, all the elements in the construction being exposed and turned to decorative account. The table is fitted for outdoor use, being made entirely without glue, and allowance made for expansion and contraction."

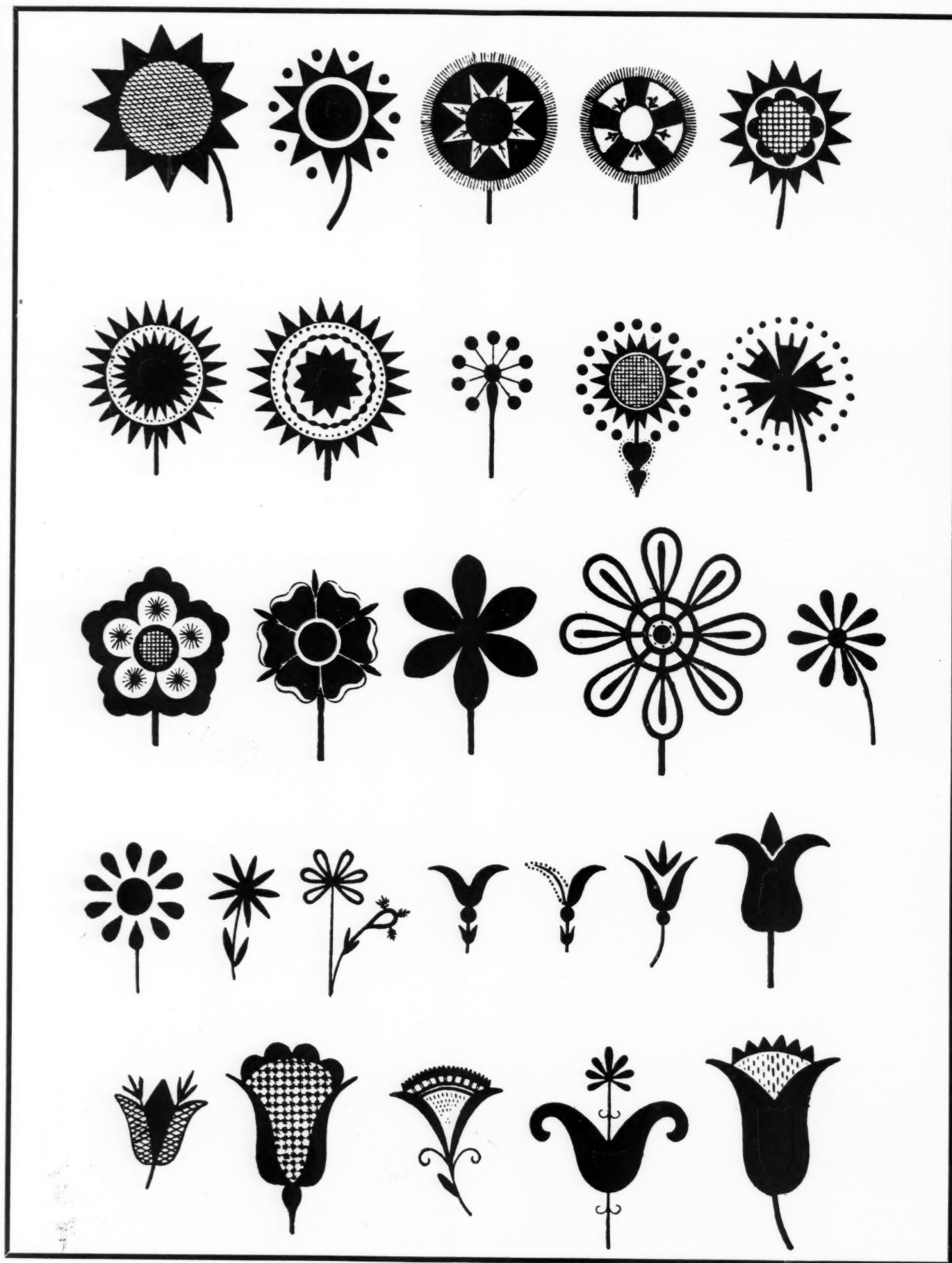
Here is Mr. Poor in his characteristically refreshing manner. I am tempted to pick a phrase from a pamphlet found in the Gallery, to help describe this group, for they illustrate "that satisfying union of practical necessity and true artistic achievement."

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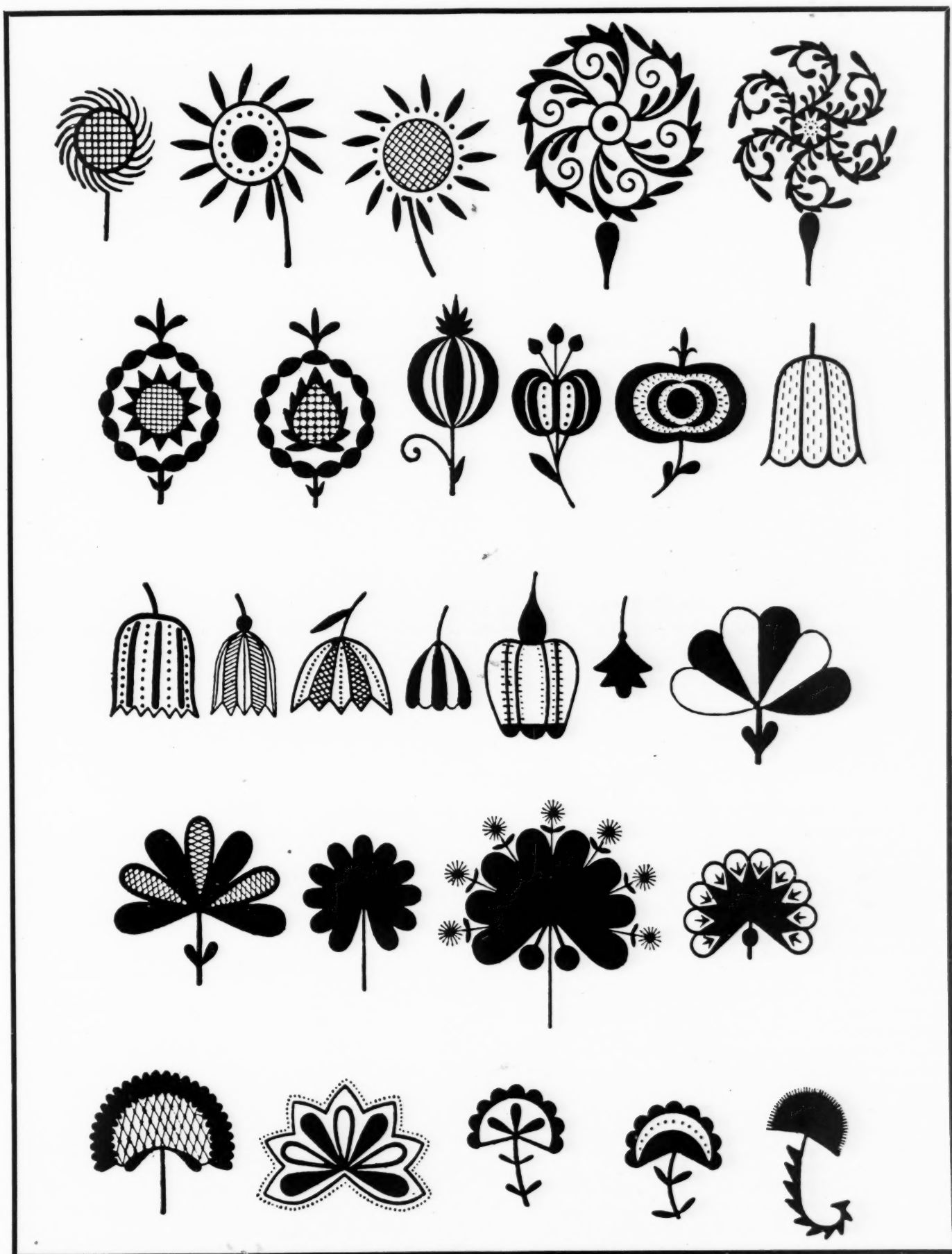


Dining room
in tulip wood
with pottery
by Henry
Varnum
Poor.
Shown in
a recent
exhibition
American
Designers'
Gallery
New York
City

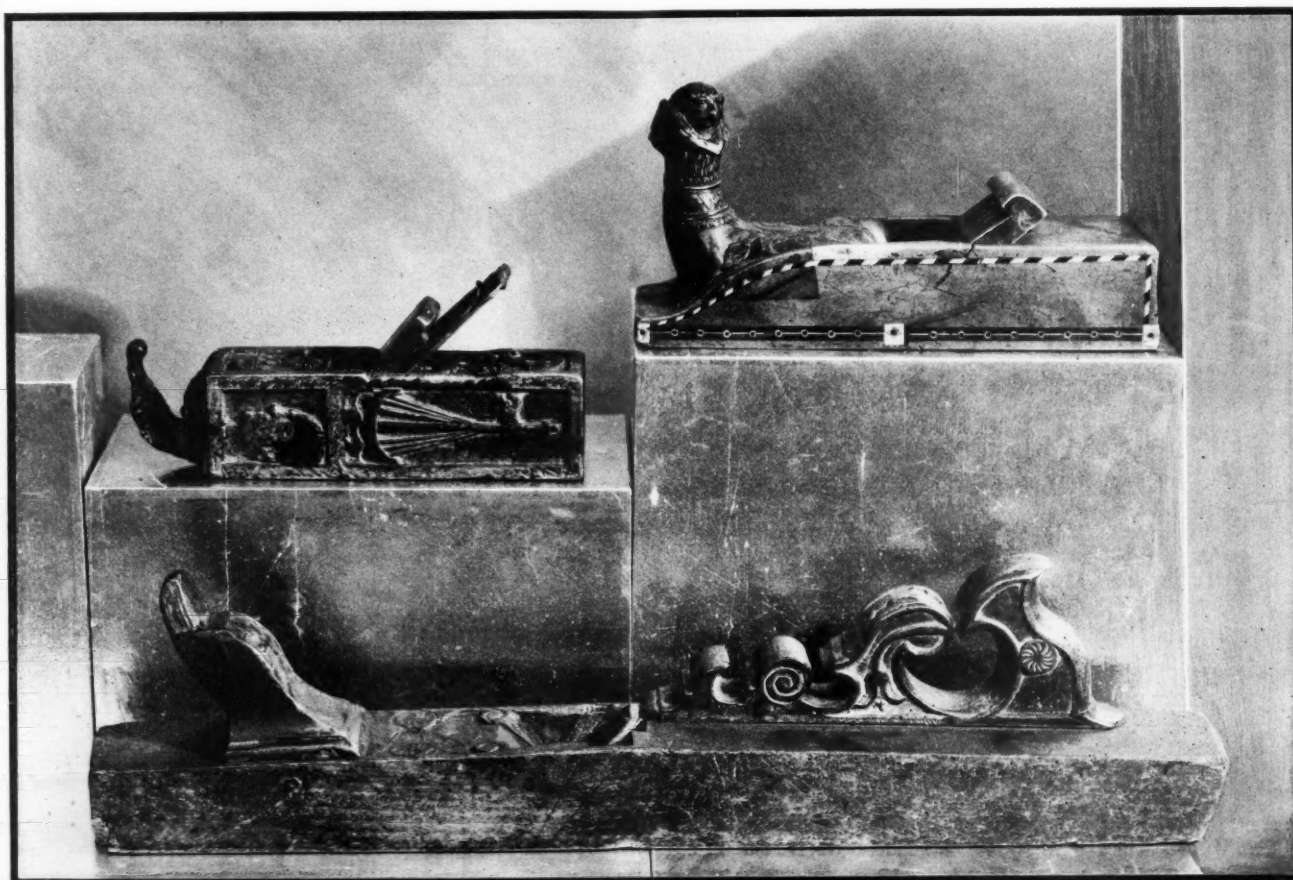




Made from Flower and Fruit by Kreslil J. Kopac



Czecho-Slovakian Decorative Units taken from Czesky Lid



Above, left to right—Fig. 1, Carpenter's plane (Provincial) Italian, Late XVI Century. Fig. 2, Carpenter's plane, Italian, Late XVII Century. Below, Fig. 3, Carpenter's plane, Italian, Early XVII Century.

SOME OLD TOOLS OF SIXTEENTH CENTURY EUROPE

Katharine Gibson

Photos from collection in the Cleveland Museum of Art.

IN "The Autobiography of an Idea" by Louis H. Sullivan, Chicago architect, the writer states as an axiom that "form follows function." That is, the shape of a thing is determined by its use. If you pursue that idea, you may not be as overpowered by it as was Mr. Sullivan, but you cannot fail to find it significant. Apply it to any design problem: if the designer gets too far away from the purpose of the thing designed, the result is apt to be specious and, after a short acquaintance, wearisomely illogical. This may sound like a prosaic doctrine; still you have but to look at any counter full of "art objects" to realize it only too poignantly. Here are two book ends, bison butting their way through the leather bindings of fine volumes; electric bulbs completely dominated by Chinese sun hats in defiance of the obvious fact that the function of a lamp is to illuminate; pitchers so shaped that they will not pour, with pussy cat handles by which you cannot pick them up. The array is endless, unfortunately. The artist of the Middle Ages very largely escaped this designical pitfall as did many of the more provincial workers of the Renaissance who followed him. The Medieval artist was too simple-minded, to naïve to make things look like what they are not. He worked with a clear purpose. More often than not, he was laboring under the fervor of a religious exaltation which led

him straight to the heart of what he was creating. A tower was a tower; it was made to pierce the heavens and get as near the mediating Virgin as possible. No need to load it with meaningless decoration. It had only to climb. A tapestry was a wall hanging, pure and simple. It was made to keep the great barren castle walls warm, and to give them color and life. As such, the patterns were kept flat; they were subordinated to the purpose. Because of the absolute naturalness of the workers, they felt no temptation to exceed the boundaries of a two-dimensional problem.

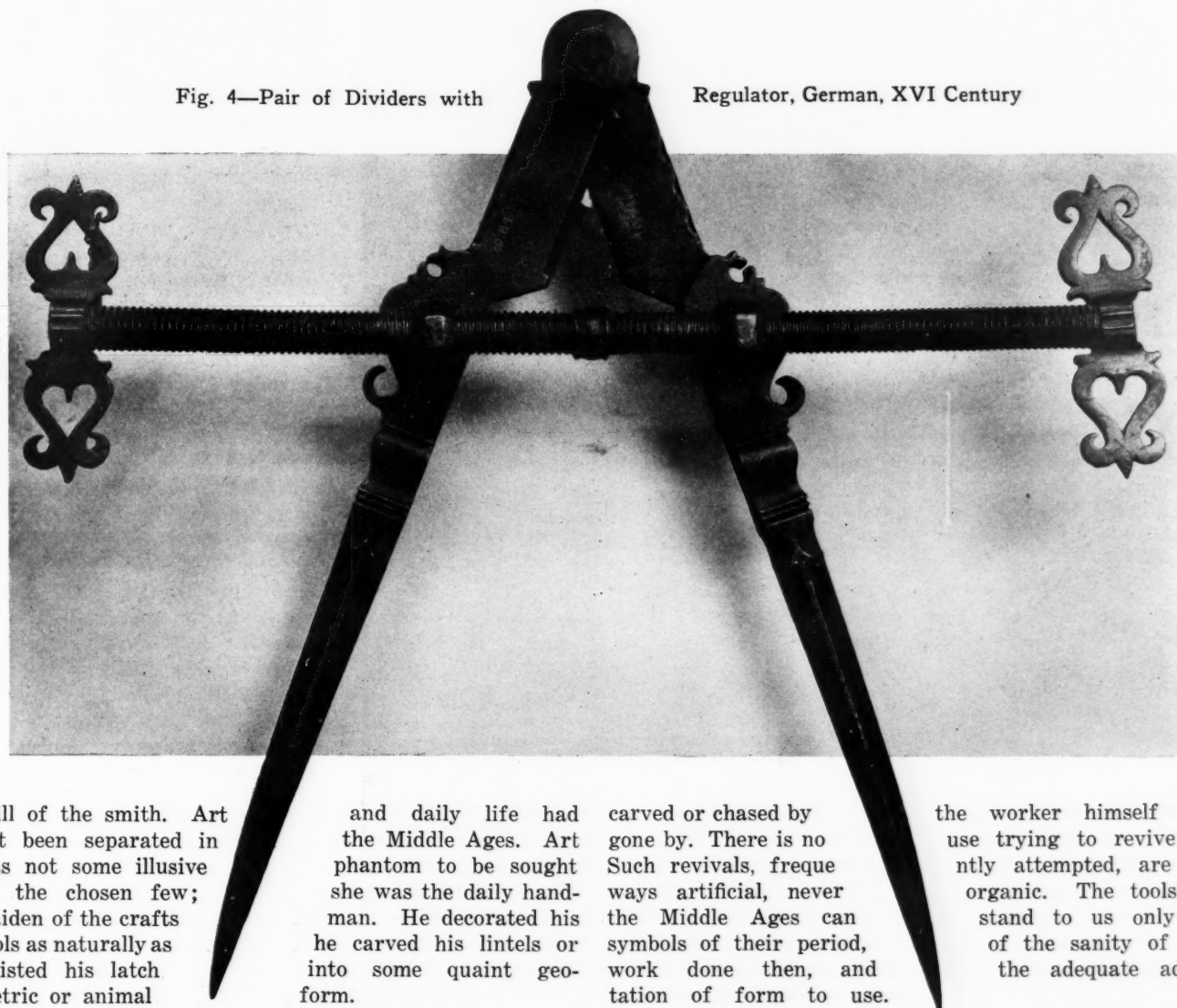
Nowhere did this Medieval artist better demonstrate his sense of form-which-follows-function, than in his tools. He decorated them; but at no point did the decoration obtrude itself upon the shape of carpenter's plane or mason's compass. Figure 1 is quite richly carved, but the patterns are in low relief and would never seem awkward against the hand of the worker. Figure 2, its box-wood and ebony inlay handle terminating in a carved lion holding a mitre—the emblem of the city of Venice—is quite as satisfactory as though made with a smoothly polished surface. The plane in Figure 3 is an interesting study in Renaissance scroll work, but that in no way prevented its serviceability, as many nicks and marks clearly testify. Figure 4, a pair of dividers, have very delightful touches of ornamental iron-

work which unite perfectly with the character of the tool; this is equally true of the brace and bit, Figure 5, or the combination tool, Figure 6, part pincer, part hammer and nail puller. Even so elaborate a mechanism as this had its share of adornment. The question arises in the modern mind as to why the artisan decorated his tools at all. The answer lies deep in the spirit of the Middle Ages. His shop, the doorways of his house, his wife's bobbins and cake molds were often marvels of the woodcarver's art, his grilles, his lanterns, his keys and locks, triumphs of the

his electric welding torch? This query reminds the writer of a conversation overheard in the Garden Court of the Museum. Two metal-workers were sitting on the edge of a bench. One turned to the other and said, "Come on Bill, let's go. This place is too d—— effeminate for me!" The writer has some sympathy with his attitude. Though its cultural value is unquestioned by the pedagogue, it is obviously hard for the man working on the chassis of a truck to see the practical application of decorative iron work in an art museum, to his job. The days of tools lovingly

Fig. 4—Pair of Dividers with

Regulator, German, XVI Century



skill of the smith. Art not been separated in was not some illusive by the chosen few; maiden of the crafts tools as naturally as twisted his latch metric or animal

and daily life had the Middle Ages. Art phantom to be sought she was the daily hand-man. He decorated his he carved his lintels or into some quaint geometric form.

carved or chased by gone by. There is no Such revivals, frequent ways artificial, never the Middle Ages can symbols of their period, work done then, and tation of form to use.

the worker himself has use trying to revive it. ntly attempted, are al-organic. The tools of stand to us only as of the sanity of the the adequate adaptation

A group of engravings by Jost Amman, a German print-maker of the sixteenth century is illuminating in this connection. The prints show the various industries of some little German town. The coppersmith, the weaver, the hat-maker, the armorer are all working with just such tools as those illustrated in this article. Albrecht Dürer also presents just such pincers, awls, and dividers in his woodcuts. Tools like these were evidently perfectly every-day affairs. They are merely the signs of an age of leisure and comparatively slow production, and are no less genuine implements of trade because they have taken their place in an art museum. Just what connection have these tools with the modern worker? Is the mechanic in an automobile factory to turn from his task and put some fantastic design upon

Of course they may serve as grist for the modern designer's mill. The furniture designer may find an interesting arrangement of panels say on the provincial carpenter's plane, Figure 1. The plane with the lion handle presents an amusing treatment of a handle—a handle for any number of possible objects. The application of floral patterns to widely varying shapes may also be studied in many of the wooden tools. But it seems that the chief value of the implements lies not so much in design units to be "lifted" or even adapted, as in the suggestion they give to the producer of common objects in use today. The worker in the modern machine shop has, as was said, no time to adorn his own tools, but there is no reason why the boredom of hammering one kind of rivet all day long

might not be alleviated by a hammer which, while eminently useful, was constructed along interesting lines. A hammer has stunning possibilities of design, which a few manufacturers even now make the most of. The medieval war-hammers, though very different in purpose from the domestic, are similar in fundamental shape and they are often remarkable examples of form organization.

If any intelligent housewife could choose between the usual clumsy pair of scissors and a well-designed pair, there is no doubt which she would take,—provided the design followed Mr. Sullivan's axiom, and the scissors fitted the hand well. Even the humble domain of the kitchen presents unlimited possibilities. Take wood: rolling pins, spoons, bowls, racks of various kinds. These could be interestingly shaped in accordance with present day taste and still serve their purpose admirably. Steel suggests the bread knife, carving knife, paring knife, and stove accessories. Tin would be a very interesting medium for experiment: pots, pans, containers of all kinds. Manufacturers are making new experiments in colored enamels, why not in form? The desirable thing is obviously not pansies painted on the family sugar jar, or knobs on the handle of the stew pan, or wreaths on the bread board; but useful objects well shaped and in the new idiom of the day, lively and entertaining.

The message of the old tools seems then progressive rather than retrogressive. In their marred, time-worn surfaces there is the very definite challenge to go forward in the mediums and manner of the present, never forgetting the wise counsel of the past and its clear recognition of the relation of form to function.

♦ ♦ ♦

POTTERY SHOWN IN NEW YORK

(Continued from Page 47)

ciated with creative expression in whatever medium used, should awaken some weary souls to pleasant thoughts about the creative artist and not his medium possessing individuality. There are two wall plaques each with a pocket for flowers. Each plaque is an ensemble of six tiles, five of which seem to the writer to be majolicas. They are modelled in a red, porous clay, covered with a cream enamel glaze, medium in thickness, over which pig-

ments of copper green, manganese brown and iron red have been applied. The central motif of the plaque is different in technique of production though it completes an entirely harmonious whole. That tile holding the pocket, which looks simply like the half of a thrown bowl, welded to a flat tile background, is made of red plastic clay. The front face of the pocket and the tile are covered with a cream white engobe through which scraffito pattern is traced and on which pigments, the same as those used in the majolicas, are layed. A small opening is pierced in each corner of this tile to permit very secure fastening against the wall. The entire tile is covered with a transparent glaze. Since the inside of the pocket is not covered with engobe or pigments it remains the dark red color of a well fired and glazed red clay.

Majolica tiles of the same shape, size and color as those three forming the upper and larger half of the wall pockets are again used to border the alcove, in which this group is placed. The radiator tiles are heavy, pierced and moderate in size, the end of the radiator being covered by six of these tiles and the top by four. The clay, glaze and colors are the same as those employed in the wall tiles. It achieves a different expression however, due chiefly to the depth of modellings and the piercing. Those four tiles used on the top of the radiator are very smooth and their pattern is gained entirely by the majolica use of over-glaze pigments. Last and most joyful to note is the luncheon set, which consists of plates of two sizes, cups, and platters both with and without covers. These pieces are thrown on a potter's wheel and again we find the red plastic clay used, and one face of each piece covered with its cream white engobe. A delicate scraffito pattern is traced through the engobe, and the pattern accented and enlivened with the same pigments used in each piece of this group. The entire surfaces are covered with a color-

less transparent glaze. One face of each piece having no engobe or pattern, its rich dark brown supplies contrast in a hearty honest manner. By some trick which a clever potter might devise the large platters are thrown on a potter's wheel, with circular foot but oval plate forms.

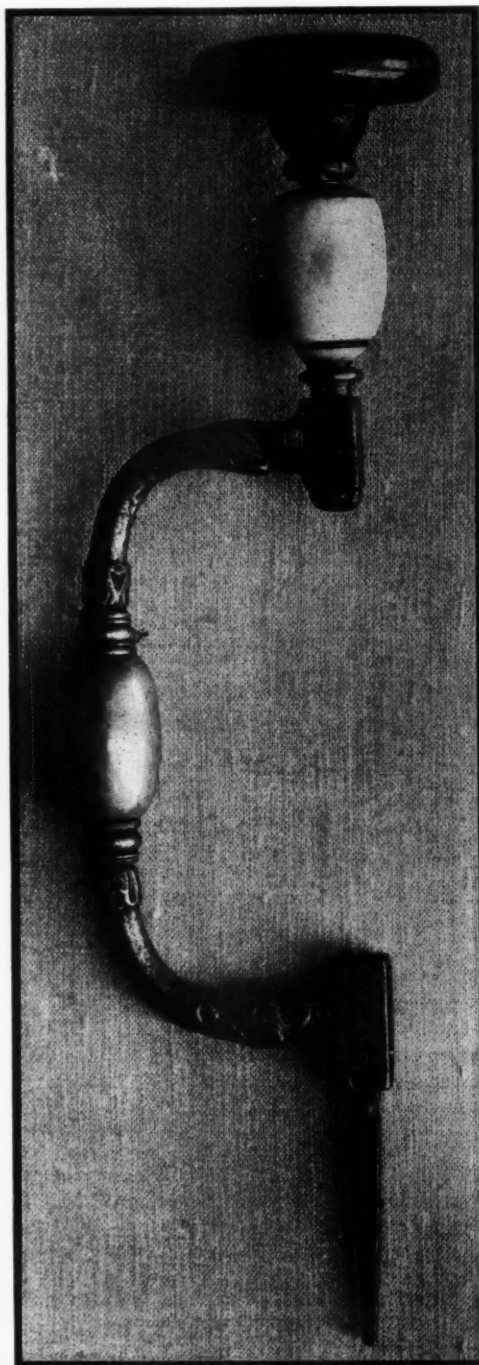


Fig. 5—Brace and Bit. German, XVII Century.



Coppersmith

Candlestick Maker

Armorer

Engravings by Jost Amman showing tools in use

The photographs indicate chiefly the decoration given each piece by the layered on pigments, but when one sees these pieces, the delicate scraffito line of rich dark red is most obviously their decoration, while the pigments accent the line of this decoration and add a note of color which may be needed, but a note which reminds the writer again of the last half of that phrase taken from the gallery publication, "and of true artistic achievement."

♦ ♦ ♦

THE DELLA ROBBIAS

(Continued from Page 46)

of the design takes it out of the realm of imitation either of style or of material.

Not so many years ago there was fostered by American terra cotta manufacturers and tolerated by American architects, a practice of substitution of terra cotta for stone designs. Many a classical cornice with all the ornament that through the centuries had evolved from stone architecture, was reproduced in the cheaper and, when so used, false material. How very different these were from the architectural decoration of the famed "Lavabo" of Santa Maria Novella. Fortunately, the modern architect is at last aware of the fact that terra cotta is as worthy and practical a material as ever came to the builder's stock, but must be respected and treated in the manner which it justly deserves. It does not mean that all tradition must necessarily be discarded. There are vast sources of wealth in the ornament of the past. The talent for the selection and adaptation, the genius for the discovery and wise and honest investment of that wealth is what is seen when Luca della Robbia finds the Greek and produces the Florentine Renaissance.

There are many other works that may be attributed to the founder of the della Robbia atelier, but these will serve to give an idea of the general character of his achievements. In these is to be seen that mysterious power which though

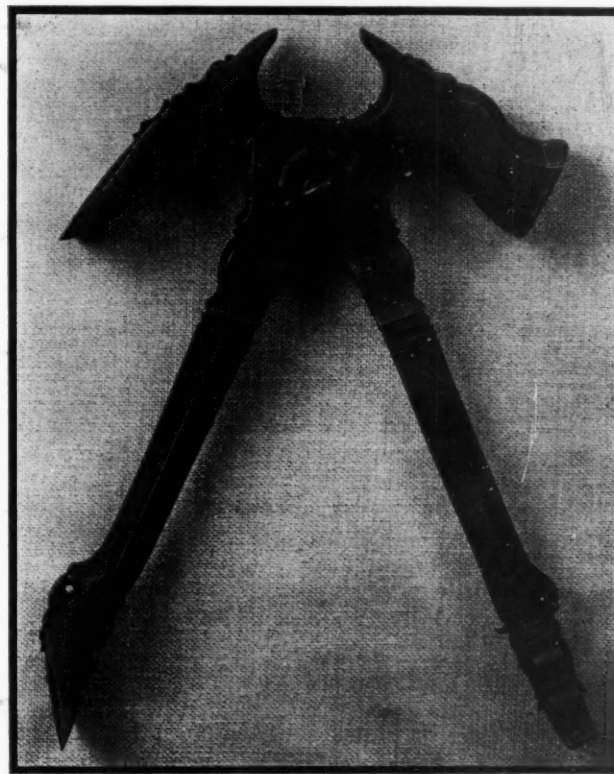


Fig. 6—Combination Tool

Part pincers, part hammer, nail puller, etc.
German or French, XVI Century.

sweet and nearly always musical, has the strength and sincerity wherein rest the high secrets of art. Donatello is one of the few artists of the Quattrocento who surpasses him. He may be accorded a position of equal rank with Jacopo della Quercia and Lorenzo Ghiberti which is a high place indeed in that glorious reawakening of humanistic art.

SURFACE DESIGNS CREATED FROM THE MOUND
BUILDERS' COLLECTION BY BEGINNING
DESIGN STUDENTS

Felix Payant

Ohio State University

EVERY designer knows that an all-over or surface pattern connotes certain qualities of decoration which are particularly related to the treatment of two-dimensional areas. It is axiomatic and obvious that, inasmuch as decoration is always subservient to the thing it adorns, in a work of art, a pattern for a flat surface should follow that flatness implied. We meet this problem in design for textiles, papers of various kinds and floor coverings. Then, secondly, the various units making up this pattern must not in themselves act as individual islands of interest in a sea of meaningless space, but on the contrary should articulate with many spaces which must all unite in such a manner that the eye moves pleasantly over the surface. It is imperative that the design, by some of the numerous means within its range, should conduct our interest from place to place over the surface without serious halts or breaks. For what more worthy purpose has a design as we associate with it than to give us exaltation and pleasure? If large flat areas have no interest of decoration, texture, or color, the eye finds such vacuity extremely trying. The movement from one point of concentration to another may be more or less sudden—a long jump or a hop—or again the movement may be like a sharp shot in unpleasant streaks. This we often see in certain stripes and in cases when the units come together unpleasantly. In neither case is there satisfaction for if we were to experiment we would discover that our artistic eye, as it were, needs to be intrigued just as our minds do in a plot of a story, yet the narrative problems involved should not become so great that the story does not move on at all. Movement, rhythmic progression, is the essential factor. There must be the growth, or that life quality, so frequently referred to as dynamic.

In order to get at these dynamic qualities it is up to the designer to forego the indulgence in the many ever-present details of little consequence with which nature abounds so plentifully. The basic relationships beyond all these are what make the real appeal and strike a significant note. If there is anything that design has learned during the past thirty years it is directness and simplicity. Think of the "floppy poppies" of L'Art Nouveau and the still worse naturalistic designs before that, when there were not beauties of construction or relationships; only surface prettiness.

The designer must ask himself, "What are some of the means for accomplishing this fine, simple movement through a design?" In working from the collection of the Ohio Mound Builders, an account of which was presented in the pages of the June issue, the students at Ohio State University learned much of design. They found that as far as designing was concerned their problems were already partly solved, for the artists who preceded them in Ohio by a few centuries had been designers of great genius. They had, in the material to be seen in the Ohio Archaeological Museum, left pieces of stone, copper, clay, mica, etc., in which beautiful lines, masses and forms were selected from nature. There was a wealth of material to work from—such a rich source of pipes, vases, ornaments, textiles and utensils. Some previous experience translating flowers into design material had taught them to appreciate that it is the funda-

mentals of construction in Nature that we enjoy. We do not find peculiar twisting edges of leaves lasting in interest, nor the accidental ragged petals of poppies or similar flowers until we go beyond and find the real order, the basic rhythm of that behavior. We never tire of simple beauty of form, and the fine relationships of such forms. Nor do we tire of musically rhythmic lines and their happy combinations, nor of harmonic occurrences of hues and values. Having worked hard to wade through the unimportant phenomena in Nature to the poetry of structural qualities, the design, students whose work appears here, appreciated what they found in the rare creations of these Indians of the Mounds.

When brought to the large collection, covering several rooms, each full of many cases, there were little or no directions given but to select and make drawings of material particularly suitable for decorative designs. Each student spent one morning session at work and made a plate like the one reproduced on page 56. These drawings were made as the student saw fit, from the several cases—a veritable gold mine to the artist who has worked for essentials. Among the kinds of specimens in the collection, as suggested in the June number, are: the fascinating carved stone ceremonial pipes, the cut, flat copper ornaments, which were worn on the bodies in connection with textiles, mica ornaments, amulets, jewelry, marbles, textiles and pottery.

The kind of pieces the young designer gathered for source material was rather indicative of how well he understood his job. Among the factors which they seemed to get from this work and which carried over into their all-over designs, is that important thing, which Clive Bell calls, "significant form." This refers to forms or shapes which mean much to us as we become acquainted with the underlying beauties of Nature in its fullest meaning. It is closely allied to what the Greeks saw in life and transferred to their vases. It is what sculptors like, these artists of the Congo or a Gaston La Chaise, make re-live in wood, metal, stone, or ivory. The two-dimensional counterpart is seen in what we call silhouette, or the contour of form. The restraint and yet expressive line in these carvings and their incised decoration provide the richest material for work in flat decoration.

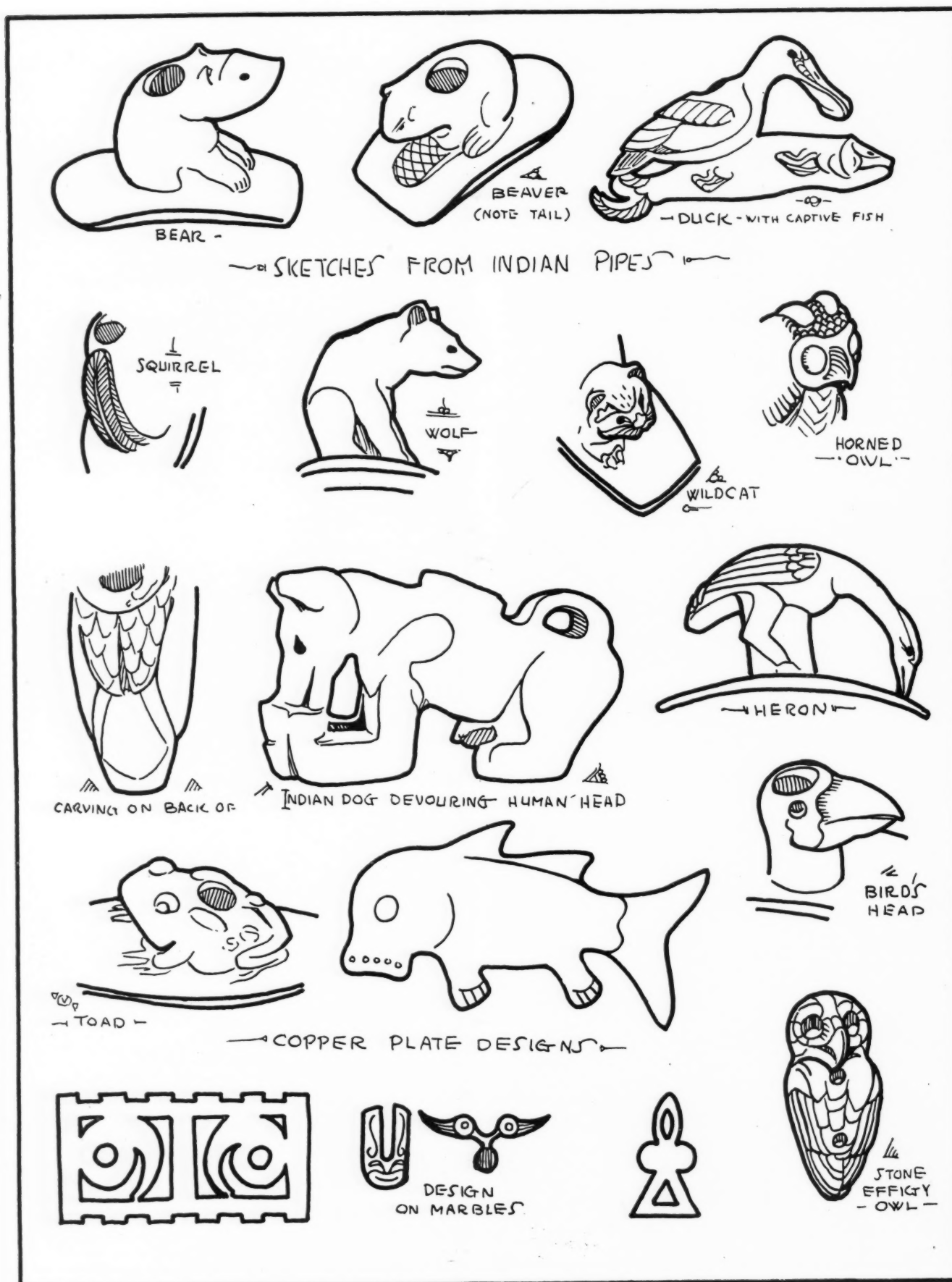
After each student had studied the Museum material, and made his drawings in India ink he was ready to start on his own—his first all-over design. And this was later to be carried out in color. They all knew there must be some regular rhythmic movement in repeating the units, single, combined or alternate. And as design of creation there were no restrictions laid on changing the Museum material. Everything must bend to the purpose of the whole. Usually a very simple order of repeating was used—the simple "checker-board" or "half-drop." The large design was developed in pencil to achieve good spacing, pleasing flow of line and above all to secure an all-over quality that gives a feeling of movement in all directions, intriguing the eye easily from one place to another. Sudden "shots" from place to place or any fastening too much on one spot were avoided.

Following this step the problem of value arrangements which would best hold the entire design together was studied. Each student made several studies of the same design in three or four values and the best scheme was selected later for the color. Some of the value studies are

(Continued on Page 59)



All-over Designs using material from the Ohio Mound Builders





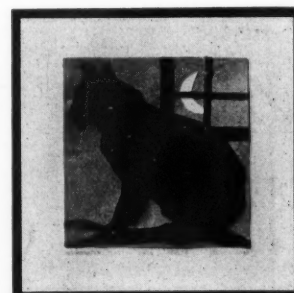
Designs for Cretonne in color from Ohio Mound Builders

CUT-PAPER DESIGNS

Agnes Lucile Melgaard

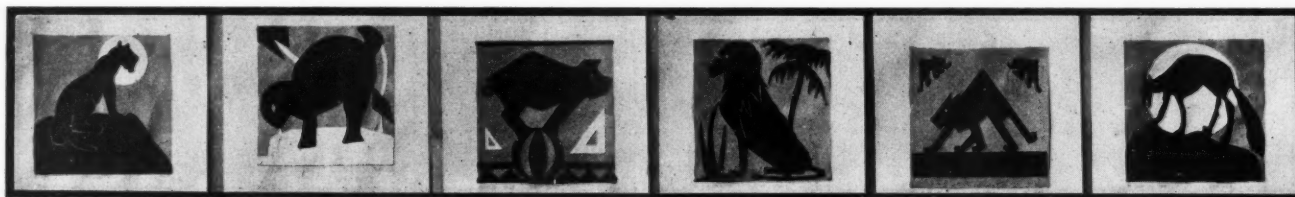
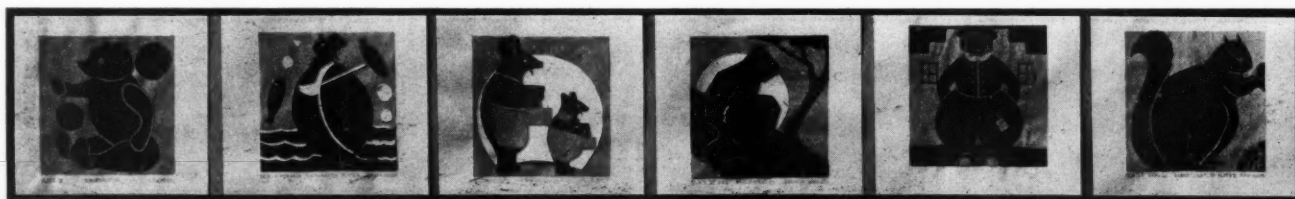
State Normal School, Cortland, N. Y.

IN order to save time in a Normal School class of beginning design students with little or no previous art training, the large all-over textile designs were carried out in cut paper. Within a square 6" x 6", the students were asked to plan a simple unit for a textile design to be used as drapes in a children's room. Inspiration was to be derived from a toy, an animal or a bird. Designs were at first drawn with soft pencil and later filled in with pencil tones of either two values—black and white—or three values—black, white and gray. Special emphasis was placed upon the principle of subordination in that the center of interest was drawn large, filling the space well. More dark than light was to be used in the value scheme. When a satisfactory unit was achieved in pencil tones, it was then carried out in tones of black, white and gray paper. The third step consisted of blocking out 6" x 6" squares upon a sheet of gray construction paper, size 18" x 24", using a drop repeat. Units of black and white paper were pasted

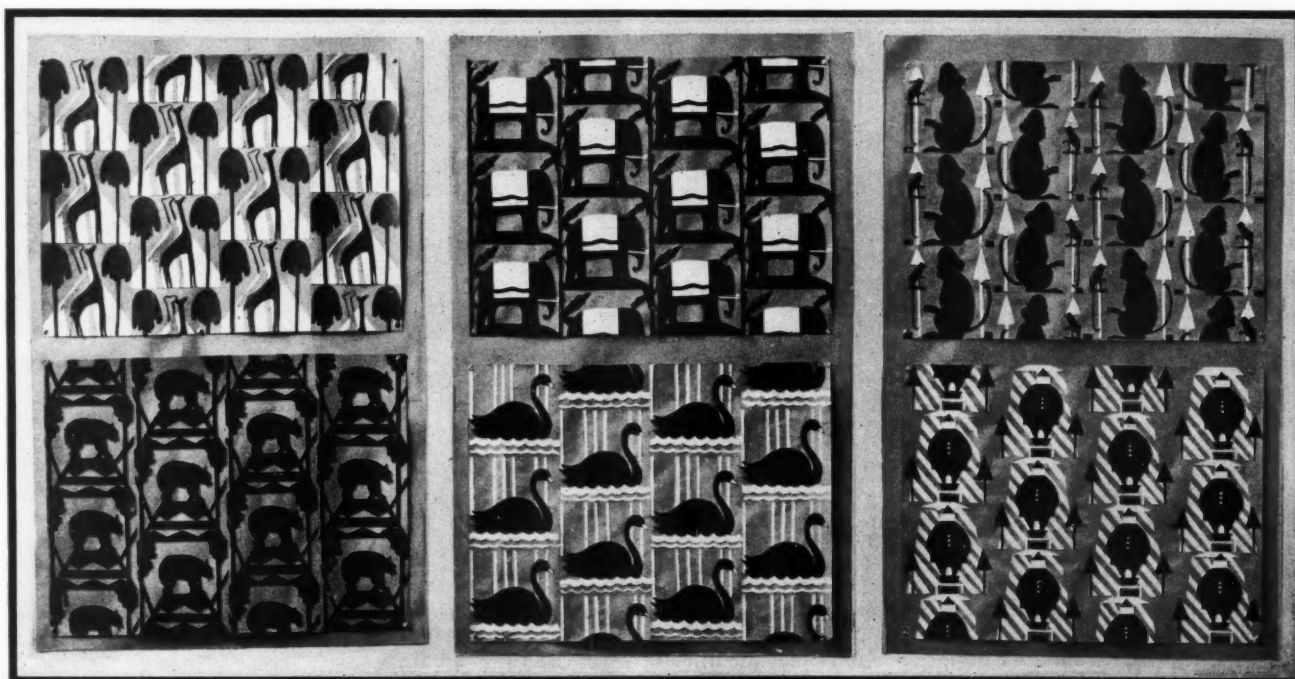


against the gray background and if the design appeared too "spotty" in the final lay-out, corrections were made in the necessary places. In this manner, a large all-over design was satisfactorily worked out so as to be simple enough for a Junior High School problem if necessary.

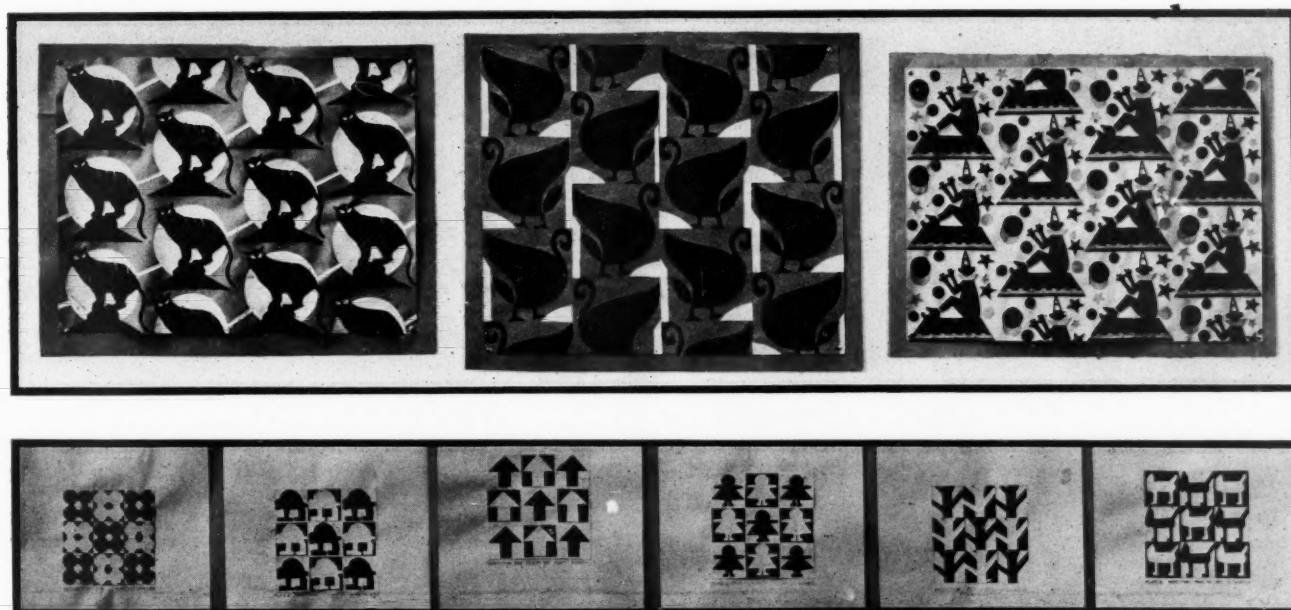
The bi-symmetric abstract block-print designs for quilts were planned using a square of nine units, the size of each unit being $1\frac{3}{8}$ " x $1\frac{3}{8}$ ". Between each unit a one-eighth inch space was left. Once more, more dark than light was to be used and the motif within each unit had to be attached and related to the outside border.



Beginning Units in Cut Paper



All-over Design in Cut Paper by Students of State Normal School, Cortland, N. Y.



Designs for Quilts by pupils of Miss Agnes Lucile Melgaard

SURFACE DESIGNS FROM MOUND BUILDERS' COLLECTION

(Continued from Page 54)

reproduced on page 55. One difficulty to be avoided was that of putting the darkest values on the smallest areas resulting in an effect of buttons standing out over the surface. Instead students started with important large areas for the darkest, then working up to the light. A pleasing balance of dark, medium and light helped to secure a pleasing effect. Sometimes more darks than lights gives greater strength.

In the problem of color harmonies at the beginning a few general directions were given. This may seem too much dictation but it gave them a freedom and a release from fear which is reflected in the finished pieces of work. Color schemes most satisfactory are those which have close relationships of hue. Beginners are always ready to have

more widely separated hues, thus giving a confusion to the design. There needs to be a variety of values—very dark, very light, and medium, with a pleasing interplay of these. There needs to be a variety in intensities of hue and values. Warm colors are best and easiest to handle in light areas while the cold are most fitting in the dark areas. Color schemes which are monotonous are apt to lack variety of value or intensity or hue though the latter is not often the case with beginners.

Two portions of finished designs in color are reproduced on page 57, the value arrangement being very slightly lost in photographing.



Eva Brook Donly





COSTUME DESIGN IN PAGEANTRY

Edith M. Bushnell

Polytechnic High School, San Francisco, Calif.

COSTUME design has long been an accepted part of the curriculum in our high schools. The art department correlates with the home economics department and give the necessary instructions for such costume design as will be of service to students who wish to design gowns or hats for street or evening wear. But the art in pageantry is more an art and belongs to the art of make-believe and historical interpretation. The drawings were made by a young student who creates this particular type of costume interpretation. It could be used as well in illustration but was not intended to do so.

The work is developed in lead pencil first. The criticisms are followed by the necessary corrections by the student, and then the work is ready to be completed in pen and ink, or color. When color is used it is added to the drawing which has been completed in pen and ink first. The values are studied and the pattern planned in dark and light. The dark is varied as to technique so that it is interesting, the light treated to a more delicate interpretation that it may retain its relative value.

I find that pen and ink work is very popular and stu-



Costumes designed by Winifred Zucker



dents readily accomplish it. In fact it is a simple technique for beginners.

I allow all sizes and styles of pens feeling that the result is what counts. We even use brushes if desirable. If the ink is reliable the water color will go on beautifully and not disturb the ink. These little figures of charm tell their own story.